DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 445 958 SO 031 377

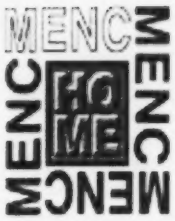
TITLE	Research Agenda for Music Education: Thinking Ahead.
INSTITUTION	Music Educators National Conference, Reston, VA.
PUB DATE	1998-00-00
NOTE	17p.
AVAILABLE FROM	Music Educators National Conference, 1806 Robert Fulton Drive, Reston, VA 20191-4348; Tel: 703-860-4000; Fax: 703-860-1531. For full text: http://www.menc.org.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Descriptive (141)
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	*Curriculum Development; Elementary Secondary Education; *Music Education; *Music Teachers; *Student Needs; Teacher Education
IDENTIFIERS	Music Educators National Conference; *Research Priorities; *Research Suggestions

ABSTRACT

The Music Educators National Conference (MENC), an organization of music teachers and researchers, has established this research agenda for music education specifies some important lines of inquiry that will lead to improvement in the quality of music teaching and learning. The agenda reflects the responses of music educators throughout the nation who answered a questionnaire in which they were asked to identify pressing issues and questions. The agenda lists 53 research questions. It is organized into the following sections: "Introduction"; "Research Questions"; "Music Teaching and Learning in a Time of Innovation and Reform"; "Music Education for New, Diverse, and Underserved Populations"; "Supporting and Surrounding Issues"; "MENC's Research Enterprise"; "On the Purpose and Process of Research: Marsha's Story"; and "In Conclusion." Includes 11 notes. Contains resource lists, including MENC research journals, other research journals, special research interest groups, and related research agendas. (BT)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

ED 445 958



Research Agenda for Music Education

Thinking Ahead

Copyright © 1998

Music Educators National Conference
1806 Robert Fulton Drive
Reston, VA 20191-4348
Phone: 703-860-4000
Fax: 703-860-1531
Internet: http://www.menc.org
All rights reserved.
Printed in the United States of America

SO 031 377

M. A. Cameron

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

A Research Agenda for Music Education

Thinking Ahead

- Introduction
- Research Questions
- Music teaching and Learning in a time of Innovation and Reform
- Music Education for New, Diverse, and Underserved Populations
- Supporting and Surrounding Issues
- MENC's Research Enterprise
- On the Purpose and Process of Research: Marsha's Story
- In Conclusion
- Notes
- Resources
- MENC Research Task Force

Introduction

The Music Educators National Conference (MENC) has had a long association with the research community in schools and in colleges and universities through its Society for Research in Music Education (SRME). The membership of SRME includes researchers, research advocates, and MENC members with an interest in research applications. We are fortunate to have a research base developed through decades of systematic inquiry.1 At this point in our research history, we can (1) assess what we already know, and (2) describe what we want and need to know.

MENC is supporting the efforts of SRME to communicate in a broad and timely fashion not only the most current research, but also research summaries, applications, and resources. Still, there is much work to be done. It is the purpose of this research agenda to describe what we want and need to know, to identify key concerns for research in music education, to encourage thought and discussion about the conduct and application of research (see "Marsha's Story"), and to inspire both preservice and inservice music teachers to participate in research. At the same time, this document explains how music education can benefit from the involvement of every music educator in the research process, gives a brief historical and descriptive overview of the MENC research enterprise, and lists related resources.

A task force including leadership from the MENC National Executive Board, MENC's Society for Research in Music Education, and the MENC national office was called together in summer 1996 by President Carolynn Lindeman to discuss a possible research agenda for the Music Educators National Conference. In the autumn of 1996, a call was placed in the Journal of Research in Music Education, Update, Music Educators Journal, Teaching Music, General Music Today, and Journal of Music Teacher Education, asking MENC members to "Help MENC Help You" by submitting research questions. SRME representatives were asked to develop other sections of the research agenda.

The main body of the research agenda‹the questions‹was developed through a content analysis of the research questions submitted by MENC members and in consultation with members of the research community. Topics and questions were grouped into categories, and from these categories three major areas for study emerged:

- Music Teaching and Learning in a Time of Innovation and Reform: Curriculum, Learning and

Development, Assessment, and Teaching and Teacher Education
- Music Education for New, Diverse, and Underserved Populations: Diversity and Inclusion, and School and Community
- Supporting and Surrounding Issues: History, Research and Dissemination, and Advocacy.

While developed independently, these research themes are consistent with priorities established in the "MENC Strategic Plan"2 concerning quality of teaching and learning, advocacy, and program effectiveness of MENC. Further, the outcomes are not unlike previous analyses of teachers' research questions.3 There is substantial consistency with other educational organizations' research agendas that focus on student learning and underserved populations (see "Related Research Agendas"). Congruence with our strategic plan and consistency with previous research interests show professional continuity. The present document is intended to build on our past, support present strategic objectives, and go beyond current research and practice by helping us to think ahead.

Improving the quality of music teaching and learning is of primary concern to the music education profession. Music educators are always searching for better ways to engage students in music learning. They try new and different techniques and methods in an effort to improve the instructional process. And music researchers continually look for answers to questions that will help to advance music education. They examine and interpret research findings, describing the applications of research in the music classroom.

The Music Educators National Conference (MENC), an organization of music teachers and researchers, has supported research in music education for decades. As part of its current efforts to strengthen music education, MENC has established research as a key direction in its Strategic Plan. This has resulted in the development of a research agenda for music education that specifies some important lines of inquiry that will lead to improvement in the quality of music teaching and learning. The agenda reflects the responses of music educators throughout the country who answered a questionnaire in which they were asked to identify issues and questions that need to be studied.

We urge all those who care about music teaching and learning to consider the questions in this agenda carefully, to learn more about the research process, and to determine how they personally can become engaged in seeking answers to these questions and in applying research results in the music classroom. This research agenda for music education belongs to all music educators[emd]elementary and secondary music

teachers, college and university teachers, and undergraduate and graduate students. Our profession's best thinking is needed as we prepare to teach the students of the twenty-first century.

MENC Research Task Force

Carolynn A. Lindeman, Chair

Research Questions

Music educators face broad and important issues: What is so important about music that communities are asked to allocate precious time and fiscal resources to its place in the curriculum? How can we communicate this value? How do children learn music and teachers teach it? How can we reach such a diverse population as American school children? What does it mean to be a good musician? Such questions are at the heart of music education, and we need all of our professional resources to answer them.

Scholarship in music education encompasses philosophy and history. It includes rich description of successful programs. It explores new ideas about individual and group behavior in music, and it tests the outcome of certain conditions or techniques, for better or worse. Diverse modes of inquiry are invaluable to research in music education when they are applied to important questions about what we want and need to know (see Research and Its Forms sidebar).

The following questions are broad enough that they may be studied from many perspectives. They were developed from questions submitted by students, music teachers, researchers, college and university faculty, arts education specialists, and members of state departments of education. The questions are divided into three areas‹Music Teaching and Learning in a Time of Innovation and Reform; Music Education for New, Diverse, and Underserved Populations; and Supporting and Surrounding Issues. In each of these areas, we need our profession's best thinking.

Research and Its Forms

Research is a systematic inquiry and can take many forms:

Philosophical--Why
- Formal examination through systematic logic and examination
- Knowing, valuing, realizing meaning

Historical--What has been
- Documented discussion of the past
- Analysis, interpretation, preservation, discovery

Descriptive--What is
- Quantitative and qualitative observation of people, places, settings, and things
- Ex post facto description, evaluation, interpretation, verification

Experimental--Establishing cause and effect
- Observation of outcomes based on controlled inquiry and structured situations
- Development of theories over time
- Isolation of cause and effect relationships, hypothesis testing, theory application

Music Teaching and Learning in a Time of Innovation and Reform

Members of our professional organization place a high priority on student learning and development, and on instructional strategies. Curricular innovations and challenges have forced teachers to rethink music content, scheduling, technology, delivery of instruction, and assessment. Researchers and teachers have theoretical and practical interest in how children develop and learn across many domains related to music. Music Teaching and Learning in a Time of Innovation and Reform encompasses questions in four categories: Curriculum, Learning and Development, Assessment, and Teaching and Teacher Education.

Curriculum

The National Standards for Music Education identify what students should know and be able to do as they progress from kindergarten through grade 12.4 Most states have established standards, largely in line with the national standards, and many school districts have, as well. In addition, to help schools deliver a comprehensive music curriculum, MENC has outlined opportunity-to-learn (OTL) standards in the areas of staffing, facilities, equipment, and curriculum.5 Now the challenge is to find ways to implement and study the outcomes of the standards and examine emerging curricular issues in a time of education reform.

The profession's best thinking is needed to explore questions such as the following:

- How can content listed in the national standards be communicated to and implemented by persons responsible for local curriculum development? To what extent are the standards being implemented, by whom, and with what result?
- What are the potential costs and benefits to music programs of school reform proposals such as charter schools, school-to-work programs, and distance learning?
- What are the potential costs and benefits to music programs of instructional arrangements such as block scheduling, class size, out-of school programs, and time in class?
- What are the most appropriate school music activities, and what is the best balance among these activities to bring about aesthetic responding? performance achievement? lifelong involvementin music?
- What are some ways that music can be integrated with other school subjects, such as language arts, visual arts, mathematics, science, social studies, physical education? How can teachers maintain high standards of music education within interdisciplinary settings?
- How can cooperative learning models be adapted to music instruction?
- Is there a core of songs that can and should be learned by all American school children?
- How can advances in technology enhance existing music curricula? How can advances in technology change traditional curricular content and values?

Learning and Development

Music education is a lifelong process involving students at all levels. Music is an academic subject with its own special body of knowledge, skills, and unique ways of knowing and thinking. It offers unique opportunities force reativity and self-expression. Musical knowledge and skill need to be developed and nurtured. Further study is needed to determine how children learn music, what developmental levels are optimal for emphasizing various skills, what experiences students should have, and what techniques should be used.

The profession's best thinking is needed to explore questions such as the following:

- What are successful materials, techniques, and settings that motivate students to participate in general music and ensembles?

- What are effective techniques that help students acquire music knowledge and skills?
- What are successful techniques to help students apply their acquired music knowledge and skill to new pieces and situations; that is, how do they learn to make transfers and solve problems?
- How are positive attitudes developed toward music learning and unfamiliar music experiences?
- Are there prescribed sequences of learning experiences or teaching techniques that will lead to musical understanding and performance?
- What is the importance of early experience on the musical development of children? Are there developmental "windows of opportunity" for learning certain music skills or attitudes?
- What are successful techniques and classroom protocols for maintaining good discipline in music classes?
- What music learning experiences are good precursors to continued music participation beyond the school years?

Assessment

Once standards have been set for student achievement, learning must be assessed in line with those standards. A variety of assessment techniques may be used in music classroom and ensemble settings. Studies are needed to determine what techniques are most effective and how best to use the results of assessment. Music assessment should be based on specific objectives that identify clearly what students should know and be able to do.6.

The profession's best thinking is needed to explore questions such as the following:

- What are valid forms of assessment in the arts, and how can they be used to improve student achievement in music?
- What are the expected musical and other outcomes of a good music education, and how can they be documented?
- What are some strategies for incorporating ongoing assessment into ensemble rehearsals and general music classes? How can individual learning, as well as group learning, be determined within context?
- How can technology be used to facilitate record keeping and assessment?

Teaching and Teacher Education

Teacher education institutions need to examine their programs and ensure that they are prepared to educate tomorrow's teachers. Since music educators cannot teach what they do not know, they must themselves develop the skills and knowledge that will be required of their students. Preservice education alone is not enough, however. Professional development is also essential to enable music educators to be productive throughout their professional lives. To meet these challenges, colleges and universities will need to work in partnership with local school districts and professional associations, find new ways of mentoring their graduates, and develop new ways to participate systematically in inservice teacher education.

The profession's best thinking is needed to explore questions such as the following:

- What are some good models for cooperation between school districts and colleges or universities in providing field experiences for preservice and beginning teachers?
- What are some good models for support and mentoring of beginning music teachers?
- What is a good balance of subject matter expertise (music), methods classes, and practicum experiences in preparing new teachers? What should be the distribution of these elements throughout the music teacher education program?
- What are appropriate goals, modes of delivery, and instructional methods for preparing preservice early childhood and elementary educators to incorporate music into their classrooms?
- What techniques--such as journal-keeping, observation, continuing education, and graduate study--keep teachers engaged and learning throughout their professional lives?
- What information, support, and services can be provided by MENC and other organizations to

assist teachers in meeting their responsibilities?

Music Education for New, Diverse, and Underserved Populations

Because of changes in social ideals and public policy, today's music educators must be prepared to include students of diverse backgrounds, abilities, and interests in their classes and ensembles. Initiatives in music in early childhood and in later adulthood are increasingly common. The expansion of music education services to diverse populations was voiced as a priority for research by many MENC members. Questions related to Music Education for New, Diverse, and Underserved Populations fall into two broad categories: Diversity and Inclusion, and School and Community.

Diversity and Inclusion

Social issues, changing demographic patterns, and inclusion of special learners in the music classroom present significant challenges for music education. The fact that today's music educator must be prepared to teach diverse and underserved populations underscores the need for examining the best methodologies, techniques, conditions, and materials for bringing music to the entire student population in the nation's classrooms.

The profession's best thinking is needed to explore questions such as the following:

- How may different learning characteristics be approached successfully in music instruction? Under what conditions are adaptations necessary in ensemble or classroom instruction? What types of adaptations are the least intrusive and allow for maintaining high musical standards within the inclusive setting?
- What classroom environments are most conducive to the inclusion of children with disabilities, and what strategies can best facilitate successful inclusion?
- How can music facilitate interaction and communication among children with different learning abilities and cultural backgrounds?
- What principles guide the selection of repertoire and materials for children in various settings (urban, rural, suburban, regional) and groupings (multicultural, multiethnic, homogeneous)?
- What techniques and materials are available to ensure that American and international students whose first language is not English are involved in school music programs?
- What are some strategies for including other significant persons (parents, other teachers, classroom aides, other music professionals) in the development, implementation, and evaluation of individualized programs for children with different learning abilities and cultural backgrounds?
- What techniques are available to ensure that learning in the classroom will transfer to environments outside the school setting?

School and Community

In the future, we can expect that the role of the certified and qualified music specialist will grow, expanding to that of a facilitator who works with others who are involved with students' music education, including parents, other teachers, and the community. To be most effective, music educators will need to promote lifelong learning in music, becoming involved with music programs for both preschool children and older adults. Such efforts will require contributions and cooperation from the community, other school personnel, the media, and the music industry.

The profession's best thinking is needed to explore questions such as the following:

- How do school music programs contribute to community life? What contributions can music organizations and musicians in the community make to the school music program?
- What types of out reach programs can be developed between school and community that will provide lifelong music learning and involvement?

- How can music programs be extended to young children and older adults? What opportunities exist for intergenerational music participation?
- How can school personnel more actively engage parents and other caregivers in their children's music education? How can music teachers assist parents in helping their children reach long-term goals?
- How can local and national news media contribute to music education by working with schools and professional organizations on programmatic initiatives?
- How can the music industry and professional arts organizations contribute to music education?

Supporting and Surrounding Issues

There are a number of questions that are important to the research process but not directly concerned with teaching and learning. Not only does the history of our profession have intrinsic interest, but it can yield knowledge and insights that are useful in contemporary settings. The timely dissemination of research is a key concern in today's fast-paced and information-overloaded world. Finally, knowledge gained from research using various modes of inquiry may be used to support and advocate existing music programs and to provide the background for new ones. Questions related to these surrounding and supporting issues are grouped into these three categories: History, Research and Dissemination, and Advocacy.

History

Music education has a history of more than 160 years in America's public schools. Many individuals have played an important role in the development of school music programs, as have educational institutions and professional organizations. As we look to the future, we need to study past practices and review current practices to determine their relevance to current and future programs.

The profession's best thinking is needed to explore questions such as the following:

- What is the significance of place in the history of American music education? In what particular locations across the country have important music education developments taken place?
- What institutions, organizations, and other similar groups have been important in the development of music education in this country? What is the impact of this legacy on music education in the present? How might planning for the future benefit from a knowledge of the history of music education in various localities, states, and regions of the country?
- What is the history of major concepts and ideas in American music education history? What are the antecedents of present issues and concerns in the profession? How can a knowledge of the past explain the present and help us prepare for the future?
- Who are or were the most important people in the history of music education in America? What were their most important contributions? What is the impact of their legacy on music education in the present? How might planning for the future benefit from a knowledge of their lives and works?

Research and Dissemination

The music education research community has been growing for more than eighty years. Especially since the establishment of the Society for Research in Music Education in 1960, research has been thriving. Research today is facilitated by technological advances. Interest in applied research is expanding, and a wide variety of methodologies are available for the researcher. The audience for research findings is also growing as the importance of research becomes increasingly apparent.

The profession's best thinking is needed to explore questions such as the following:

- What are the characteristics of successful partnerships (school university, teacher collaborations, and so on) for answering questions through applied research?

- How can students, teachers, administrators, and parents learn to read research, make transfers, and apply it wisely to their own interests?
- What steps can be taken to allow timely dissemination of research findings and their replications?
- How can technology such as electronic databases and on-line journals be used to communicate research to a broad audience?
- How can the knowledge gained from programmatic research efforts be communicated and applied to the international community?

Advocacy

While music programs in some schools are thriving, in other schools, the position of music in the curriculum has eroded substantially in recent years. To preserve and enhance music education in the schools, improved communication with the public sector and with education decision makers is necessary. Effective coliaborations are needed, as well as increased support from a wide variety of constituencies. Such advocacy efforts will be crucial for keeping music at the core of the school curriculum.

The profession's best thinking is needed to explore questions such as the following:

- What are the musical, academic, and social outcomes of music education, and how can they be communicated to the public as a basis for continued fiscal support?
- What are useful repositories of information, materials, and strategies for music teachers whose programs are being challenged?
- What lines of personal and professional support exist or can be developed for music teachers who are experiencing lack of public support for their programs?
- What are the characteristics of schools and communities that have well-established, respected, and financially supported music programs?
- How might collaborative relationships among arts educators be established at the local level and be used as a basis for arts advocacy? Are there effective ways to prepare preservice arts educators for effective collaboration?

MENC's Research Enterprise

The Music Educators National Conference's involvement with research groups and publications dates back to 1918 with the formation of the Educational Council, which evolved into the Music Education Research Council (MERC) in 1932. Developments in the 1950s brought about a structure that laid the foundation for today's research enterprise: The Journal of Research in Music Education was established in 1953, MENC division research committees were appointed in 1954; and the Society for Research in Music Education (SRME) was created in 1960. The enterprise grew throughout the next three decades with the establishment of the MENC Historical Center in 1965, the development of the SRME handbook in 1968 and its revision in 1971 and 1993, the establishment of Special Research Interest Groups (SRIGs) in 1978, the first SRME Senior Researcher Award in 1988, and the adoption of Update: Applications of Research in Music Education in 1989.

The Society for Research in Music Education is composed of members of the Music Educators National Conference who share concerns about the process, product, and applications of research in music education. It facilitates organized, collective actions; a broad base of support; and communication among persons in research in music education.7 The purposes of the Society, as described in the SRME handbook, are to:

1. Encourage research activity and improve research in fields related to music education as well as in music education;
2. Provide an effective framework for the exchange of information among persons engaged in or interested in research in music education;

3. Sponsor sessions at professional meetings devoted to reports of research studies and other relevant topics.
4. Oversee and advise the Conference on research-related publications; and
5. Foster and develop efforts that seek to apply research findings to the practice of teaching and learning

Leadership in the Society consists of the Music Education Research Council (MERC), which comprises a nine-member executive committee; members of the editorial committees of MENC's two research journals, chairpersons of Special Research Interest Groups, and state research chairpersons.

The two research journals published by MENC under the auspices of SRME are the Journal of Research in Music Education and Update: Applications of Research in Music Education (see "Resources" for additional information about these periodicals). In addition to reading research journals, MENC members are encouraged to engage in there search community through active participation in the following Special Research Interest Groups: Adult Community and Continuing Education, Affective Response, Creativity, Early Childhood, General Research, History, Instructional Strategies, Learning and Development, Measurement and Evaluation, Perception, Philosophy, and Social Sciences. Each of these SRIGs publishes a newsletter and sponsors a session at the biennial meeting of MENC. (For further information about these SRIGs, contact MENC.)

The music education research community has thrived over the past eighty years. Interested parties now include students, teachers, supervisors, university faculty, and members of the business and arts communities at large. Numerous opportunities exist for these various constituencies within the MENC research enterprise. Of course, to participate in this enterprise, it is advantageous to have knowledge about the ways in which research is conducted, disseminated, and applied. Issues related to the purpose and process of research are described in the next section.

On the Purpose and Process of Research

Marsha's Story

Marsha is a college student participating in an ensemble. Her experiences in the choir have included informal observation of the conductor, and she reasons that the behaviors she has seen must be requisite for an ensemble director. Since the conductor is successful, Marsha believes that if she imitates his behaviors, she will achieve a similar level of success in her future teaching experiences.

Someday Marsha may attain success as a conductor, but in order to achieve that success, it is likely that she will need to go far beyond her general and informal observations regarding the teaching process. In her music education classes, Marsha has had a brief introduction to research on teaching and conducting. She is beginning to understand that in doing research, the researcher develops an attitude of careful, analytical thought and measured, specific observation about events and people.

The research process necessitates a deliberate consideration of myriad and specific issues beyond surface observations in the effort to understand the social interactions, the musical relationships, and the teaching and learning processes used in music classrooms and ensembles. Research as systematic inquiry requires gathering data, as objectively as possible, and interpreting it, following specified procedures. Marsha discovers that she must slow down and resist the temptation to reach conclusions quickly. She learns that she must avoid looking for convenient and simplistic answers to complex questions.

From one of her professors, Marsha hears about the *Journal of Research in Music Education.* She decides that as a Collegiate MENC member and a future music educator, she should subscribe to this professional research journal. Despite her initial enthusiasm and her best intentions, when she begins

to receive the journal, she finds that she is unable to comprehend much of the material, particularly some of the quantitative results sections that include various statistical symbols. She also discovers that although some research articles attempt to address "real-world" problems, they often conclude with more questions than answers. Marsha sees that research does not seem to affect the practices of teachers until after a large number of studies are conducted. It is not surprising that she soon abandons her commendable effort and allows her subscription to lapse.

Obviously, Marsha requires more than surface knowledge of the research process. To participate more personally and to understand the findings generated through research, she needs greater familiarity with and specific knowledge about the research process and its arcane vocabulary. This is not a simple task for Marsha or for anyone else. Is it worth the effort? Can Marsha really benefit from increased participation in research? Would the research process help her, for example, to expand her critical thinking and problem-solving skills? Perhaps just as important, would music education benefit by her involvement?

The process of research is criticized by some who are seeking the "right answer" for classroom problems. Research does not and cannot provide "works every time" solutions to situations music teachers encounter, nor can any other resource ensure such answers. This does not mean that the desire for practical answers is not understandable or that the pursuit of them is not worthwhile.

Because research and its conclusions are limited, specific, and upgraded continuously (yes, even historical research is subject to revisions!), answers are not simple or fixed. But there is widespread evidence of research offering solutions to problems. Systematic inquiry obligates investigators to change their views as new data are received and ideas or hypotheses tested. While certainty cannot be achieved through research (i.e., results are never proven), the gradual accumulation of information and theoretical interpretations leads to new ideas, assessments, evaluations, and recommendations. In turn, these lead to yet more new ideas and designs, and sometimes they eventually lead to implementation of new teaching strategies that will improve the instructional process.

Inquiry is discovery, and in many ways, teaching is also discovery. Many classroom teachers already know that engaging students in the process of discovery is a most effective strategy. This appears to be true for teachers themselves, as well. The assimilation of new information and its subsequent application to individual or group teaching, learning, and performing experiences is common to the best teaching and research. Research requires and develops the tools of questioning, critical thinking, and problem solving. Many music research projects provide a convenient forum for developing skills required for teamwork, such as flexibility, as well as for developing musical skills and oral and written communication skills. Most of these are the skills that employers in all areas say they are seeking.

If researchers in music education are to pursue an agenda that is relevant to music teachers, then teachers must help by providing questions and lines of inquiry. Through study of the research process, teachers can learn to make transfers from research findings and gain insights and broader views of what they are attempting to do. Teachers engaged in analytical thinking will seek out research that is relevant to their own teaching situations and make appropriate transfers, and further, it is hoped, will provide researchers with suggestions for future investigation. Madsen[8] found that every teacher is capable of making transfers and generalizing from research results to his or her own situation. Elementary teachers can learn from results found in middle schools. Band directors can benefit from research in children's singing.

Such efforts by teachers should not go unnoticed. They should be accompanied by reciprocal efforts of researchers to interpret and apply the results of research where they may be relevant.[9] Just this sort of effort was made by a team of music educators in the MENC publication *What Works:* Instructional Strategies for Music Eucation.[10] The team members "examined and interpreted research literature having significant conclusions for application in music instruction." The instructional strategies that accompany the research citations in *What Works* are offered with the caveat that the reader "study carefully more than a few entries before 'lifting a few' procedures that seem to be 'good ideas.'"

After learning more about the research process from her music education professor, our friend Marsha

has been inspired once again. She decides to attend a research poster session at her state music educators meeting. She observes that some researchers are genuinely enthusiastic, while others are more guarded about their findings. Although none of the studies precisely address her situation, she notes also that some studies seem very practical and directly address classroom instruction, while others seem more theoretical.

At the poster session, Marsha also overhears several comments, such as "Oh, I already knew that" and "Oh, that can't be right," or "That's not what I think." Marsha realizes that the persons making such comments need to be better informed about research and the research process. The discovery of the obvious is one aspect of research that may make it seem uninteresting to some. By now, Marsha has learned that researchers sometimes discover that the obvious answer is not always the right answer, and that what seems to be commonsense is frequently found to be invalid.

Marsha also overhears another kind of comment: "What good is it?" She notices that this type of reaction seems to occur when a given fact (relationship or phenomenon) does not seem to be related to anything else we know or care about. Of course, research must start somewhere, and results from a series of studies on ocarinas, for example, might someday lead to a beneficial integration of these findings with instruction regarding more common instruments. If no application of findings to real life problems can be found, there are some who dismiss the findings as unimportant.

Why do researchers study such esoteric topics? First, new knowledge, whether useless or useful by practical criteria, provides aesthetic pleasure to many people in the same sense that a symphony or a painting offers pleasure to others. In fact, this intellectual curiosity and the satisfaction of discovery are important motivations for music researchers.[11] Second, history tells us that we cannot judge the ultimate usefulness of a discovery at the time it occurs. For example, Faraday, in the field of electricity, and Mendel, in the field of genetics--to name only two of many researchers who have profoundly affected our lives[emd]were not concerned with the usefulness of their work. In thinking about the comments she hears, Marsha cannot help but make a transfer to the numerous times she has been asked by her parents or friends about the usefulness of a major in music.

Socrates said that the unexamined life is not worth living. Yet he understood that to make our own choices, to live life our own way, we must understand ourselves and the world around us. We must be aware of the opportunities we have. Research in history, philosophy, science, and all lines of inquiry shows us how people have lived and dreamed about living. It points out the consequences of making certain kinds of choices. It provides models for us for conducting and understanding our own lives and improving the lives of others. For the music educator, and even for future music educators like Marsha, research offers a special opportunity to improve music teaching and learning, giving students the lifelong benefits of a music education.

In Conclusion

The fifty-three research questions listed in this document reflect a wide variety of issues and concerns important to music education. On the basis of these questions, it is clear that the following broad areas of study and the categories within each area are our key concerns for research in music education:

- Music Teaching and Learning in a Time of Innovation and Reform
  - Curriculum
  - Learning and Development
  - Assessment
  - Teaching and Teacher Education
- Music Education for New, Diverse, and Underserved Populations
  - Diversity and Inclusion
  - School and Community
- Supporting and Surrounding Issues
  - History

- Research and Dissemination
- Advocacy

Finding answers to the questions in this agenda is now our challenge. All music educators[emd]preservice and inservice--regardless of what level or which area they teach, can and should be involved in this inquiry. By seizing this opportunity to study and investigate these important research questions, we can look forward to the promise the results of our research hold for improving the quality of music teaching and learning in classrooms across America.

Notes

1. See Ruth V. Brittin and Jayne M. Standley, "Researchers in Music Education/Therapy: Analysis of Publications, Citations, and Retrievability of Work," *Journal of Research in Music Education* 45, no. 1 (1997): 145-60; Charles P. Schmidt and Stephen F. Zdzinski, "Cited Quantitative Research Articles in Music Education Research Journals, 1975-1990: A Content Analysis of Selected Studies,"*Journal of Research in Music Education[m1 41,* no. 1 (1997): 5-19; Cornelia Yarbrough, "A Content Analysis of the *Journal of Research in Music Education,* 1953 1983," *Journal of Research in Music Education* 32, no. 4 (1984): 213-22; and Cornelia Yarbrough, "The Future of Scholarly Inquiry in Music Education: 1996 Senior Researcher Award Acceptance Address," *Journal of Research in Music Education* 44, no. 3 (1996): 190 203.

2. MENC National Executive Board, "MENC Strategic Plan" (Music Educators National Conference, Reston, VA, photocopy).

3. Patricia J. Flowers, Mark W. Gallant, and Nancy A. Single, "Research Dissemination in Music Education: Teachers' Research Questions and Preference for Writing Style," *Update: Applications of Research in Music Education* 14, no. 1, 23-30.

4. Consortium of National Arts Education Associations, *National Standards for Arts Education: What Every Young American Should Know and Be Able to Do in the Arts* (Reston, VA: Music Educators National Conference, 1994).

5. Music Educators National Conference, *Opportunity-to-Learn Standards for Music Instruction: Grades PreK-12* (Reston, VA: Author, 1994).

6. Music Educators National Conference, *Performance Standards for Music: Strategies and Benchmarks for Assessing Progress Toward the National Standards, Grades PreK-12* (Reston, VA: Author, 1996).

7. Music Educators National Conference, "Handbook of the Society for Research in Music Education," *Journal of Research in Music Education* 41, no. 4 (1993): 269-81.

8. Clifford K. Madsen, "Making Research Apply to Your Classroom," *Music Educators Journal,* 71, no. 8 (April 1985): 18-19.

9. James L. Byo, "Comments from the Editor," *Update: Applications of Research in Music Education* 15, no. 1 (1996): 2.

10. Margaret Merrion, ed., *What Works: Instructional Strategies for Music Education* (Reston, VA: Music Educators National Conference, 1989).

11. Albert LeBlanc and Jan McCrary, "Motivation and Perceived Rewards for Research by Music Faculty," *Journal of Research in Music Education* 38, no. 1 (1990): 61-68.

Resources

MENC Research Journals

Journal of Research in Music Education--Quarterly by the Music Educators National Conference. Published reports of descriptive, experimental, historical, and philosophical research. Each article is preceded by a brief summary (abstract). Subscription address: *Journal of Research in Music Education,* MENC, 1806 Robert Fulton Drive, Reston, VA 20191-4348. MENC members may subscribe by choosing an option on their MENC membership form. Selected back issues available from publisher. Microfilm copies of all back issues available from University Microfilms, 300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106.

Update: Applications of Research in Music Education--Two issues annually by the Music Educators National Conference. Attempts to bridge the gap between music education researchers and teachers by publishing the results of research studies in nontechnical language. Subscription address: *Update,* MENC, 1806 Robert Fulton Drive, Reston, VA 20191-4348. MENC members may subscribe by choosing an option on their MENC membership form. Photocopies of back issues from volumes 1-7 available from Music Library, University of South Carolina. Selected back issues and photocopies of other issues from volumes 8-present available from publisher.

Other Research Journals

Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education--Quarterly by the School of Music, University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana. Publishes reports of descriptive, experimental, historical, and philosophical research, and reviews of books and dissertations. Subscription address: Council for Research in Music Education, School of Music, University of Illinois, 1205 W. California, Urbana, IL 61801. Selected back issues available from publisher.

The Bulletin of Historical Research in Music Education--Three issues annually by the Department of Art and Music Education and Music Therapy, University of Kansas. Publishes historical research articles, book reviews, reprints of selected historical documents, and lists of recent publications. Subscription address: George N. Heller, *The HRME Bulletin,* 311 Bailey Hall, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS 66045 2344. All back issues available from publisher.

Journal of Music Therapy--Quarterly by the National Association for Music Therapy. Publishes reports of descriptive, experimental, behavioral, historical, and philosophical research about music therapy, music in medicine, and music for persons with disabilities. Subscription address: National Association for Music Therapy, 8455 Colesville Road, Suite 1000, Silver Spring, Maryland 20910.

Journal of Band Research--Semiannually by the American Bandmasters Association. Publishes reports of historical, descriptive, and experimental research about bands, as well as analytical research on band music and book reviews. Subscription address: Troy State University Press, Frankie Muller, Managing Editor, Troy, AL 36082. Selected back issues available from University Microfilms, 300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106.

Contributions to Music Education--Semiannually by the Ohio Music Education Association. Publishes descriptive, experimental, historical, and philosophical research articles. Subscription address: *Contributions to Music Education,* The Hugh A. Glauser School of Music, Kent State University, Kent, OH 44242-0001. All back issues (some only as photocopies) available from publisher.

Missouri Journal of Research in Music Education--Annually by the Missouri Music Educators Association. Publishes reports of research studies of various types, and abstracts of research papers presented in Missouri. Subscription address: Charles Robinson, Associate Editor, *Missouri Journal of Research in Music Education,* Conservatory of Music, 4949 Cherry, University of Missouri-Kansas City, MO 64110.

PMEA Bulletin of Research in Music Education--Annually by the Pennsylvania Music Educators Association. Publishes reports of research studies of various types. Subscription address: Joanne Rutkowski, Editor, *PMEA Bulletin of Research in Music Education,* Pennsylvania State University, School of Music, University Park, PA 16802-1901.

Research Perspectives in Music Education--Annually by Florida Music Educators Association. Publishes research articles with accompanying abstracts on a wide variety of topics related to music education. Subscription address: *Research Perspectives in Music Education,* Florida Music Educators Association, 207 Office Plaza Drive, Tallahassee, FL 32301.

Southeastern Journal of Music Education--Annually by the University of Georgia Center for Continuing Education. Publishes articles based on papers presented at the annual Southeastern Music Education Symposium held at the University of Georgia. Subscription address: *Southeastern Journal of Music Education,* Suite 295, Georgia Center for Continuing Education, University of Georgia, Athens, GA 30602.

Philosophy of Music Education Review--Semiannually by the School of Music, Indiana University, Bloomington. Publishes results of philosophical research in music education. Subscription address: *PMER,* Music Education Department, School of Music, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN 47405.

Texas Music Education Research--Annually by the Texas Music Educators Association. Publishes reports of research studies submitted and reviewed following presentation at the annual meeting of the Texas Music Educators Conference and the Texas Music Educators Association. Subscription address: Texas Music Educators Association, P. O. Box 49469, Austin, TX 78765.

Special Research Interest Groups

For information regarding Special Research Interest Groups--Adult Community and Continuing Education, Affective Response, Creativity, Early Childhood, General Research, History, Instructional Strategies, Learning and Development, Measurement and Evaluation, Perception, Philosophy, and Social Sciences--contact Music Educators National Conference, 1806 Robert Fulton Drive, Reston, VA 20191.

Related Research Agendas

Goals 2000 Arts Education Partnership (1997). *Priorities for Arts Education Research.* Available from Goals 2000 Arts Education Partnership, One Massachusetts Ave., NW, Suite 700, Washington, DC 20001-1431.

NAEA Commission on Research in Art Education (1994). *Art Education: Creating a Visual Arts Research Agenda Toward the 21st Century: A Final Report.* National Art Education Association, 1916 Association Dr., Reston, VA 20191-1590.

National Association of Music Merchants (no date). [Research Agenda] Executive Summary.

National Endowment for the Arts (February 1994). *Arts Education Research Agenda for the Future.* Order number 94-3402. Available from U.S. Government Printing Office, Superintendent of Documents, Mail Stop: SSOP, Washington, DC 20402-9328 (order desk phone 202-783-3238).

U.S. Department of Education/Office of Educational Research and Improvement (December 1996). *Building Knowledge for a Nation of Learners: A Framework for Education Research 1997.* Order number OAS 97-6004. Available from the U.S. Government Printing Office, Superintendent of Documents, Mail Stop: SSOP, Washington, DC 20402 9328 (order desk phone 202-783-3238).

MENC Research Task Force

Carolynn A. Lindeman, Chair
Patricia J. Flowers
Judith A. Jellison
Phyllis R. Kaplan
Harry E. Price

MUSIC EDUCATION RESEARCH COUNCIL

Patricia J. Flowers, Chair
Harold F. Abeles
Melissa Brotons
John M. Geringer
Jere T. Humphreys
Roseanne Rosenthal
Wendy L. Sims
Jack A. Taylor
Joel Wapnick

SPECIAL THANKS TO

Harriet I. Hair
for her contributions

John J. Mahlmann
Executive Director

Margaret A. Senko
Director of Publications

Jeanne Spaeth
Publications Manager

Copyright © 1998

Music Educators National Conference
1806 Robert Fulton Drive
Reston, VA 20191-4348
Phone: 703-860-4000
Fax: 703-860-1531
Internet: http://www.menc.org

All rights reserved.
Printed in the United States of America

BEST COPY AVAILABLE